Tune In to the Midnight Heart

Finding the girl behind the voice.

BWAM

I'M DOING SUPERBLY WELL, OF COURSE!

HELLO, LADIES! HOW ARE YOU ALL DOING?

BROAD-CASTING ROOM (TEMP.)

HEH HEH. IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU FULL OF PEP IN THE MORNING.

HEYO!

RAWR

RAWR

GOOD MORNING!

SULK

...

HELLO?

WHAT'S THE MATTER?

つーん

SULK

SULK

IT'S ME, YAMABUKI.

NOW, ABOUT THE REVISIONS FOR THE SCRIPT...

くるっ

FWIP

ALL RIGHT! LET'S PREPARE FOR THE MORNING BROADCAST.

POW

:8

TALK TO ME, DUMB-ASS!

DID SOME-THING HAPPEN?

RIGHT... SORRY ABOUT THAT.

ASK ME WHAT'S BUGGING ME OR SOME-THING!

DON'T JUST IGNORE ME!

WHAT WAS THAT FOR?!

もじ…
FIDGET

WHAT IS YOUR PROB-LEM?!

I CAN'T TELL YOU...

もじ…
FIDGET

SHUT UP! JUST SHUT UP!

RAGH

RAGH

RAGH

DO YOU WANT TO TALK ABOUT IT OR NOT?! WHICH IS IT?!

YOU SURE KNOW HOW TO HOLD A COHERENT CONVERSATION, DON'T YOU?!

TUNK

SHE'S PRETTY ADORBS WHEN SHE GOES "BLEHHH" LIKE THAT.

WHAT IS HER PROBLEM?

I HAVE THINGS TO DO, SO I'M LEAVING!

...BUT IT HASN'T BEEN WORKING OUT FOR HER, IT SEEMS.

SHE JOINED THE THEATER CLUB LAST WEEK AS A HELPER...

THE THEATER CLUB?

BLEHHH

NENE ONLY LIKES PEOPLE WHO LIKE HER.

REALLY?

She still acts cheerful in class, though.

IF YOU'RE NOT CLOSE TO HER, SHE'LL GO OUT OF HER WAY TO SHUN YOU.

THAT'S FAR FROM TRUE.

SHE AGREED TO IT SINCE IT'LL HELP HER PRACTICE FOR ACTING.

HMM...

GIVEN HER PERSONALITY, I THOUGHT SHE'D WORK WELL WITH ANYONE.

...all the people who hate me!!

I hate...

That sounds like something she'd say.

...I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT'S THE CAUSE OF THIS...

WELL, I MEAN...

CAN YOU DO SOMETHING ABOUT THIS, YAMABUKI-KUN?

TWITCH

ヒソヒソ

Can't you help her, Bucky?

STARARE

HALF-BAKED ADVICE WOULD ONLY PLANT UNHELPFUL PRECONCEPTIONS IN HER MIND.

AND BESIDES, LIVE-ACTION ACTING ISN'T THE SAME AS VOICE ACTING.

...THERE IS NO ONE WHO CAN GIVE HER A HELPING HAND RIGHT NOW.

UNFORTU-NATELY...

Are you kidding me?

DON'T BE ABSURD...

HOW EXACTLY CAN ANYONE RESOLVE THIS WHEN SHE DOESN'T WANT TO TELL US WHAT'S GOING ON?

Wow, egging him on sure is worth it.

EXCEPT FOR ME...

ZWSH

...ARISU YAMABUKI!

Too easy...

THEATER CLUB

SHE BRIEFLY SHOWED UP IN CHAPTER 1.

I WAS THE ONE CLOSEST TO YOU...

AND YET, I COULDN'T GIVE YOU ALL MY LOVE!

OH! PLEASE FORGIVE ME FOR BEING SUCH A PATHETIC MAN!

THEATER CLUB MEMBER
SEIRA OIZUMI

WHISPER

DIDN'T SHE WANT TO MARRY THE HEIR OF A BIG CORPORATION?

HER DREAM IS TO BECOME AN ACTRESS AND THEN MARRY A CELEBRITY TO GET HIS MONEY, AFTER ALL.

WHISPER

WHISPER

OIZUMI-SAN HAS REALLY BEEN POURING HER HEART INTO THIS LATELY.

BAM

THAT YOU LOVE ME ONCE MORE?!

...WILL YOU TELL ME...

BAM

IF YOU'RE STILL IN LOVE WITH ME...

BAM

IF YOU...

IF YOU'RE GOING TO FORGIVE ME...

SURE!

I LOVE YOU.

CUT! CUT! SHUT THE CAMERA DOWN!

FWOOM

THERE'S NO CAMERA ROLLING TO BEGIN WITH.

OIZUMI-SAN?!!

CRASH

WHAT IN THE WORLD WAS THAAAT ?!

UH... YES...

WELL, THAT'S MOST CERTAINLY NOT THE IMPRES-SION I GOT!

HIME-KAWA-SAN!

DID YOU ACTUALLY READ THE SCRIPT?!

WHAT DID I TELL YOU?!

SH-SHE'S MEEK AS A LAMB RIGHT NOW!

RAGH

RAGH

IT'S A VERY COMPLEX AND POWERFUL SCENE!

AND YET, YOUR PER-FORMANCE WAS LIKE THIS...

HE DES-PERATELY BEGGED FOR HER FORGIVE-NESS LIKE THE PITIFUL MAN HE IS!

THE GIRL HAD MIXED FEELINGS ABOUT THIS, BUT SHE KEPT THEM BOTTLED UP AND FORGAVE HIM...

LISTEN HERE! IN THIS SCENE, THERE'S A FOOLISH MAN WHO GAVE HIS HEART TO ANOTHER WOMAN...

OVER A TRIVIAL DISAGREEMENT WITH THE GIRL HE LOVED, EVEN THOUGH THEY WERE BOTH INTO EACH OTHER!

OIZUMI-SAN!

THUNK

IT'S UTTERLY SHAL-LOW !!!

SURE!

I LOVE YOU! ♡

3K CUTESY

BUT I PUT A LOT OF *THOUGHT* INTO IT...

CH-CHEAP IMITA-TION?

HUH...?

WOULD YOU STOP THROWING YOURSELF AT THE EQUIP-MENT?

FWIP

YOUR "ACTING" IS NOTHING BUT A SHALLOW, CHEAP IMITATION!

"THOUGHT"?

DO YOU ACTUALLY...

...THINK WHEN YOU'RE ACTING?

...BEFORE YOU CRY OR GET ANGRY?

DO YOU REALLY STOP AND THINK, "ALL RIGHT! I'M GONNA CRY"...

YOU MUSTN'T THINK WHEN YOU ACT.

I-I...

...

EMOTION IS SUPPOSED TO BE ***SPONTANEOUS,*** NOT BORN FROM CONSCIOUS THOUGHT.

DON'T YOU AGREE?

I'VE HEARD OF THIS BEFORE...

I SEE...

UNBELIEVABLE... YOU CAN'T EVEN ANSWER THIS QUESTION ON THE SPOT?

OKAY...

YOU NEED TO GET IT RIGHT THIS TIME, HIMEKAWA-SAN!

ALL RIGHT, LET'S TAKE IT FROM THE TOP ONCE MORE!

...BUT NOW I'M REGRETTING MY CHOICE! SHE DIDN'T HAVE TO TALK DOWN TO ME LIKE THAT, DAMN IT!

I AGREED TO JOIN THIS CLUB BECAUSE IT'D HELP ME IMPROVE MY ACTING...

HOW ANNOYING... WHAT EXACTLY DID I DO WRONG?!

I JUST DON'T KNOW HOW TO EXPRESS THE EMOTIONS SHE WANTS SINCE I DON'T HAVE ANY EXAMPLE, UNLIKE WITH ANIME AND MANGA!

IN FACT, I'M THINKING REALLY HARD ABOUT HOW TO ACT!

THINKING WHEN YOU'RE ACTING IS JUST NORMAL, ISN'T IT?

THINK! THINK! THINK!

...THAT YOU LOVE ME ONCE MORE?!

HOW CAN I PORTRAY THE EMOTIONS IN THIS SCENE?

EVEN NOW, I'M THINKING ABOUT ALL THAT STUFF!

HOW DO I PUT ON A GOOD PERFOR-MANCE?

WILL YOU TELL ME...

SHAKE
SHAKE
SHAKE
I LOVE YOU.
S-SURE.
SHAKE
SHAKE
SHAKE
SHAKE
I-I'M NOT RESISTING THE CALL OF NATURE OR ANYTHING!
IF YOU NEED TO USE THE BATHROOM, JUST STEP OUTSIDE. IT'LL BE ON YOUR RIGHT.
THE NEXT DAY.
WHO'S THIS GUY?!
I DIDN'T EXPECT SHE'D BE THIS MEEK OUTSIDE OF HER TURF...
MASSAGING THE PRESSURE POINT ON THE BACK OF YOUR KNEE IS VERY EFFECTIVE WHEN YOUR LEGS ARE FALLING ASLEEP.
M-MY LEGS AREN'T FALLING ASLEEP!

ISN'T SHE...

GETTING GRUMPIER EVERY DAY?

WHISPER

WHISPER

I FEEL LIKE DISASTER MIGHT STRIKE IF WE DON'T OFFER A SACRIFICE TO APPEASE HER...

RMB

SHE WAS LIKE, "DON'T THINK, FEEL!" WHAT IS SHE, SOME KUNG-FU MASTER?!

JUST ANNOYS THE HELL OUT OF ME!

THAT OIZUMI GIRL...

SCREECH

I HAVE NO DAMN CLUE WHAT SHE'S TALKING ABOUT!

EMOTION IS A SPONTANEOUS PROCESS?! SHE'S ONLY SAYING THAT TO FEED HER EGO!

YOU REALLY ARE A GOOD GIRL, NENE.

YOU'RE DOING EVERYTHING YOUR DAD WANTS YOU TO DO.

DO YOU REALLY STOP AND THINK, "ALL RIGHT! I'M GONNA CRY"...

...BEFORE YOU CRY OR GET ANGRY?

KA-CHAK

...THE WAY HE WANTED ME TO...

...ALWAYS THINKING ABOUT HOW TO ACT...

I WAS...

THAT'S RIGHT.

GRR

WHAT DO YOU WANT?

SWISH

WHOA, YAMABUKI-KUN IS GOING IN!

THERE'S SOMETHING I WANT TO SAY TO YOU.

I SAW WHAT HAPPENED IN THE THEATER CLUB YESTERDAY.

WHAT?

ARE YOU HERE TO CHEER ME UP?

HUH?

HE WAS THERE THE WHOLE TIME?

ARE YOU PAYING HOMAGE TO A STAG BEETLE OR SOME-THING?

I'VE BEEN WONDERING ABOUT THOSE HAIR ORNAMENTS OF YOURS FOR A WHILE.

YOU REALLY PISS ME OFF! WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU THINKING?!

DID YOU COME HERE JUST TO TELL ME THAT?!

WHEN YOU SENT ME FLYING JUST NOW?

DID YOU REALLY THINK ABOUT GETTING MAD...

HEH HEH HEH... NOW THAT'S A SPONTANEOUS REACTION, HIMEKAWA.

WHAM

SHAD-DUP!

PIP

HIC...

AND YET...

PIP

THAT'S IT, HIME-KAWA...

YOUR RAW EMOTIONS ARE SPILL-ING OUT!

SHAKE

SHAKE

I WAS... DOING EVERYTHING I CAN TO ACT!

EXCEL-LENT! THIS'LL MAKE FOR A GOOD PERFOR-MANCE!

JUST DON'T THINK ABOUT ANYTHING, AND OBEY YOUR INSTINCTS!

SHE JUST KEPT TALKING DOWN TO ME! I HAAATE IT!

WOW

WE tt tt tt tt!

LALALALALALA

GOOD! YOU'RE SHOWING A LOT OF EMOTION RIGHT NOW!

HIC! NOOO! I'D RATHER DIE!

WAAAAAAH

I'LL GIVE YOU SOME SPECIAL TRAINING!

YOU WANT TO GET BACK AT HER, DON'T YOU? LET'S DO JUST THAT!

CHAPTER 20: EMOTION IS A SPONTANEOUS PROCESS